

The Empire and Christianity

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cally the successors of the old Praetorian Guard,— the crack corps of the army, who were divided into regiments bearing such titles as *Scholar'es*, *Protectores*, and *Domestic*^ and enjoyed the privilege of guarding the Emperor's person. Most of the legions of the line were known as the *Comitatenses*. These were employed in the interior garrisons of the Empire, and Zosimus—whether justly or not, it is impossible to say—accuses Constantine of having dangerously weakened the frontier garrisons and withdrawn too many troops into the interior. The control of the army, under the Emperor and his two ministers for war, was vested by the end of the fourth century in thirty-five commanders bearing the titles of dukes and counts,—the latter being the higher of the two. Three of these were stationed in Britain, six in Gaul, one each in Spain and Italy, four in Africa, three in Egypt, eight in Asia and Syria, and nine along the upper and lower reaches of the Danube.

Such was the structure which rested upon the purse of the taxpayer and upon a system of finance inherently vicious and wasteful. The main support of the treasury was still, as it had always been, the land tax, known as the *capitatio terrena*, the old *tributum soli*. It was the landed proprietor (*possessor*) who found the wherewithal to keep the Empire on its feet. Diocletian had reorganised the census, and, in the interests of the treasury, had caused a new survey and inventory to be made of practically every acre of land in every province. By an ingenious device he had established a system of taxable units (*jugum* or *caput*), each of which paid the round sum of